

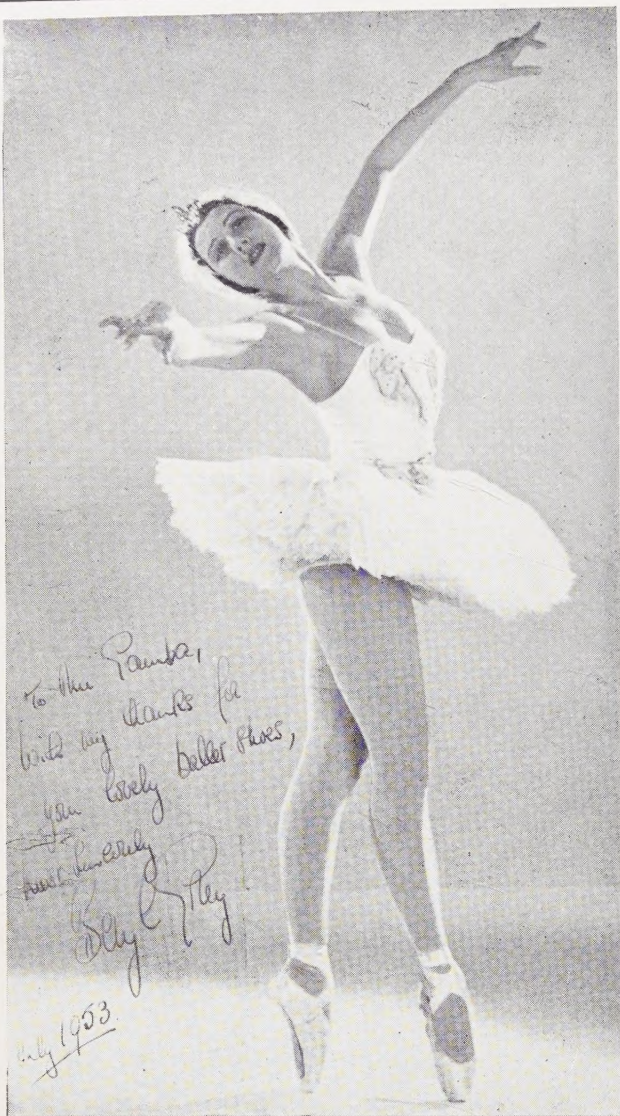
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Managing Editor : B. G. HERSCHEL
 Edited by PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND



★ ON THE COVER

LESLIE Caron returns to Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris at the Stoll this month and will be with Petit during his U.S. tour. The cover montage was designed by Daniel.

Petit's other guest — Jean Babilée—is picture on page 10.

Preview..

HE packed the Stoll to capacity during September" the posters were saying in an attempt to lure buyers for the Roland Petit book. But, as we went on sale with the book, Peter Daubeny was going two better by bringing Roland back to the Stoll.

Can Petit hold the huge Stoll again?

Of course he can. Verve, theatrical flair and slick polish will sell ballet against the dullards at any time. Petit has all the saleable ingredients of a Barnum and Bailey poster . . . and inside the theatre he has the talent that P. T. Barnum always asked for and never found.

TWO TRUMPS

And Petit has two more trumps. Jean Babilée and Leslie Caron.

With Leslie a few months ago I asked if she would dance with a company again. Meek reply: "I'd like to." Now, with Petit and MGM apparently agreed on her use, Leslie will dance the season here and star with Petit on his United States tour.

Last seen in ballet with the Champs-Elysees in 1949, Leslie has since made several successful films including AN AMERICAN IN PARIS, STORY OF THREE LOVES, LILI and she is to make MONTMARTRE next year. With Petit she will create a new ballet now being choreographed by him.

DIAMOND CRUNCHER

Babilée, to dance a new Petit pas de deux, was last seen on the London stage some five years ago. He is taking over Petit's role of the Wolf in LELOUP during this Stoll season.

Apart from Jean and Leslie, the main attraction of the season will be THE DIAMOND CRUNCHER which was again successful in Paris last month. LADY IN THE ICE failed badly during the Paris season at the Empire and was suddenly taken off.

Liliane Montevéchi—coldly fiery—is to dance the diamond cruncher. She should make a spitfire per-

formance of the ballet.

And, of course, Petit himself. That alone would make the Stoll visit worthwhile.

THE SPURT

With yet another two signees to Borovansky's Company in Australia, who knows but that the advertiser's dream of "schoolkid" ballet might come to pass?

Australia must obviously be quickly becoming a good consumer of dance if Borovansky is to be taken as guide. The money needed to sign these several artists is not insubstantial. Dance activity altogether is humming madly over there. In Sydney the mighty 309-studios Arthur Murray ballroom empire has caused chaos to local teachers by opening an outpost. And almost every week brings me

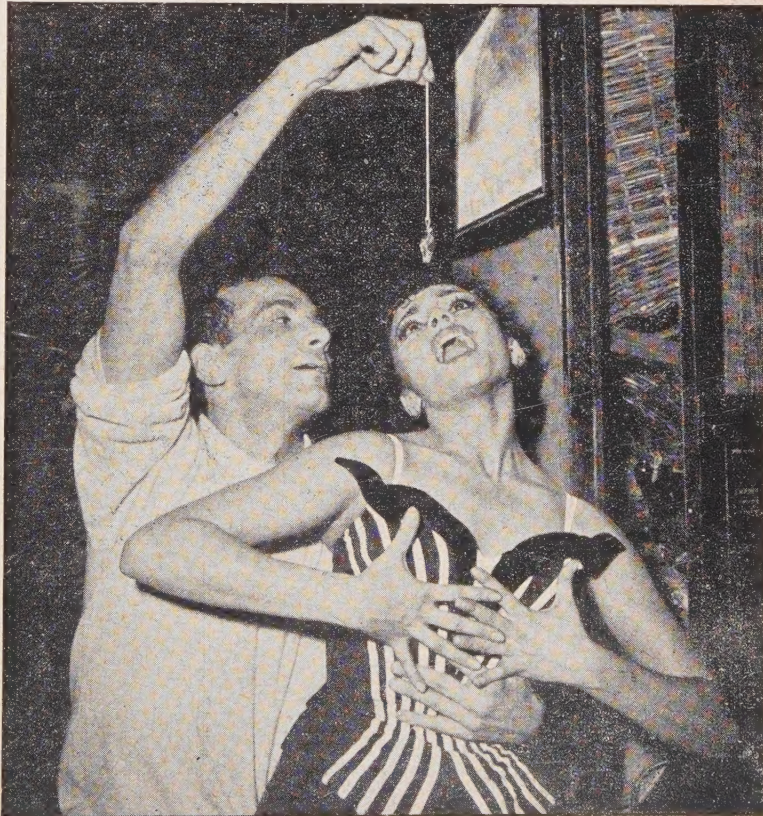
rumours of new companies, concerts, and other potential activity.

The spurt, if not the boom, is on, and its duration would seem to be up to Borovansky. If he can get around the country's theatres with a good company of dancers and ballets — he might avoid the boom's fate here.

CRIPPLED

Dozens of tiny and very bad groups tried to "cash in" on the boom here and crippled the possibilities. Only the impact of the two Wells' companies, Rambert and Festival Ballet made the cheapskated boom into an almost-secure permanency. In criticizing these four companies it is salutary to remember their work in securing the current mass audience for ballet.

© Striking LILIANE MONTEVECCHI in Petit's DIAMOND CRUNCHER Ballet





MIECIO Askanasy's **BRAZILIANA**, the Teatro Folclorico Brasileiro, opened to a good but lukewarm house at the Stoll on October 26. By the finale—a streamer-strewn carnival in Rio—the same capacity house was clapping in unison, singing and shouting the company back for encore after encore. The enthusiasm—dozens were dancing in the dress circle and stalls—was high.

Certainly **BRAZILIANA** was a case in point for having both the spirit and the flesh willing and ready!

The show opened with Candomble mounted on original African songs and inspired by the Bahian Candomble religious sects. The inevitable floor writhings were less stylized than, say, the more schooled uninhibitions of Dunham, but the ceremony was well translated.

WEAK

No Cafesal—"On a coffee plantation"—was weak in ideas whereas "How a Samba is born" was comically inventive and well-staged. Here two inattentive boot-blacks start the pervading Samba beat on their shoerest and are joined by various street musicians and girls.

Olivia Marinho—one of several lovely Negresses in the group—danced a pas de deux by Jose



Ballet in Review

by **PETER
CRAIG-RAYMOND**



© One Scene from the Coffee Plantation number in **BRAZILIANA**

Prates to an old Brazilian melody. Her partner, Gilberto Brea, was rather European in manner. The dance itself was a pseudo classic of Iberian and Negro roots danced by the man as ballet and by the girl as a Cakewalk. If harmony of concept was not uppermost, fun was!

A Macumba—banned for its religious implication in Brazil—was theatrically effective in red spots on a blacked stage. **NA PRAIA**, a fishwife's lament for their sea-tossed husbands, came over well before **FUNERAL OF A NAGO KING**—a slow, searing piece which had the evening's most insistent music.

CARNAVAL

Finally a **CARNAVAL IN RIO** massed the stage with ludicrously-costumed revellers—a Pagliaci, a girl in half a skirt and half a tights outfit—led by the Indian, calling of Nelson Ferraz. This finale mounted the audience's enthusiasm, had them clapping and dancing and eventually sent them out sure that they had seen a wonderful show.

Lack of production, some amateur approaches and a too-sparse programme dampened my enthusiasm but I very much enjoyed a good half of the show. In London today, to enjoy this much is to enjoy enormously. I did.

MANNERS -AND LAURELS

THE London stage presents a very good—probably unique—lesson in how to stage an American musical in an English musicomedie manner. The latest addition to the lesson: Jack Hylton's **WISH YOU WERE HERE**.

I did not see this show in New York but the dialogue must surely have been rewritten for England. Unfortunately the translation was not from 1953 American to 1953 English but to a 1903 English in which a girl does not sleep with Casanova—she succumbs! **LILAC TIME**, if you like. **MERRY WIDOW** if you like. But an American hit musical? I did not succumb.

NOT "SLICK"

Production of **WISH YOU WERE HERE** is lacking in the slick finish I expect of such a show. Costumes are excellent, some voices are good. But stage movement, grouping and general 'look' are poor. Again, one has the feeling of olde Englyshe musical comedy. These gaily girls wear bikinis, admittedly, but that—and that is good—apart: where are the hit ingredients?

Only, I felt, in the theme song. A good beguine, it should be the finale.

"BOP" BALLET

Bruce Trent acts more than well and has a pleasing voice, Shani Wallis disappoints in her Bop Ballet by having little to do and doing it stiffly. The chorus dancing is good but pretty rut-of-de-Mille.

WISH YOU WERE HERE had many of the basic ingredients of a hit; the mixer used too much water—a swimpool full—in the final cocktail.

REVIEWS of the first appearances of Soviet dancers in London are held over until next month so that a full report and exclusive **BALLET TODAY** photographs may be presented.

Also in the January are a number of features of especial interest including:

IN BALLET TODAY, a first Who's Who of dancers, will be published in six parts, the first next month.

VIOLETTA ELVIN by Pigeon Crowle with several new photographs.



A CLICHE COMES TO LIFE

THAT most hackneyed of clichés—the show must go on—came to life at the Embassy Theatre on October 27. Two hours before curtain time on the first night of **TROPICAL RHYTHMS** the Company's director and star—Claude Marchant—suffered severely from a fall.

He went on for his first night relying on dope and determination. They saw him through. The company danced twice as hard, twice as stagefully to cover his weakness. Especial praise should go to Kathleen Stanford whose magnetic presence ran through the evening and who virtually led the company.

Success of the evening was Carl Grandy whose mambo-rhythm dancing was a classic of its kind. **BOND STREET BLUES**, to original Jazz themes orchestrated by Vander Kruck, came over well and was a rare example of near-good Jazz music used well in theatrical dance. **ROMANZA** to the Cugat tune was effective if overlong.

TOO MUCH

Costuming throughout helped the success of the group but the choreography left rather too much to the impromptu imagination of trained dancers. Ensembles, especially, suffered from having repeatedly to spend minutes throwing out chests or opening-closing hands. More dance invention for these ensembles, much more thought to group movement and placing on stage and a very thorough tightening of production, including cues, would vastly help this cabaret-styled attraction for theatrical presentation.

Ballet Digest

INTERNATIONAL

Cover Girl Ballerina . . . E

THE latest news of Borovansky's expansion in Australia is that he has signed contracts with two of **Mona Ingleby's** International Ballet soloists: **Claudia Algeranova** and **Algeranov**.

With these two, after **Helene Armfelt**, Ingleby has had three major losses this year. So far she has not signed replacements. But the contracts augur well for ballet in Australia with **Trunoff** already under the Borovansky banner.

● NEW NEWMAYER

Julie Newmeyer, prima ballerina of Los Angeles Opera Ballet, has joined **Jacques D'Ambois** in MGM's **SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS**. This musical stars **Jane Powell** and **Howard Keel**. Recently returned from her European tour, Julie was spotted by Metro on a magazine cover.

● 10 NATIONS

Ten nationalities are represented by students at the modern ballet school of **Sigurd Leeder**. Among them is former Jooss-soloist **Patricia Bunster** from Chile.

Another Jooss dancer at the school is **Joan Turner**, who has a leading role in the dance sequence in **THE KING AND I** at Drury Lane.

● BERGLIOT CLAUSEN

I am very sorry—truly sorry—to hear of **Bergliot Clausen's** death after a traffic accident in Berlin.

When I met Bergliot she was with the **Ny Norsk Ballet**. She was an intense and beautiful girl with a probing interest in modern choreography. I wrote about her at the time in **WOMAN**. Before her tragically young death she had become prima ballerina with **Oslo State Opera Ballet**.

● ON TYNESIDE

Tyneside Ballet Workshop presented several performances last month. The programmes held several new works in addition to the already tried **GLASS MOUNTAIN** and **CONCERTO** which were successful at the Gateshead performances last June.

Dancing members are admitted on addition, and, I am told, choreographers and designers are welcome.

● EDINBURGH '54

Leonide Massine plans to stage several out-of-current-repertoire ballets produced under **Diaghilev** at the 1954 Edinburgh Festival.

● VIENNA BALLET

Six dancers appeared during October at the Princes under the title **VIENNA BALLET**. A number of readers have written to complain of this title and I agree with them. This may have been many things but as a dance critic I find it impossible to review. As entertainment in the theatre I found these six girls poor technicians and, the part of the programme I sat through, unrelievably dull.

● YOUNG BALLET

Being well in advance we would like to mention that **HEIRESS**, the beautifully produced young woman's monthly, has a dance cover on its February issue. **Joni Murray**, Editor of **HEIRESS**, has run a good number of dance features in this magazine and the February issue has an article on young blood in ballet.

● NOT THAT

Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, progenitors of **Walter Gore's** **CARTE BLANCHE**, are said to be planning a new **John Cranko** ballet. Its title: **CLOWNS**.

● The Spanish Dancers at the **INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL** caught here about to toast in Cinzano.

● PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT

The very talented and very lovely daughter that **STAR**-artist **Joss** has. Just passed her final exams, **Barbara Joss** looks very promising That audience singing-and-dancing enthusiasm at the **BRAZILIANA** first night . . . the evening that **BALLET TODAY** was not selling outside the **Stoll** and the **Brondesbury Boys' Club** took over—selling donations . . . the rumour that **George** (**Original Ballet Russe**) **Kirsta** may start a new company

● FESTIVAL TOUR

Anton Dolin's Festival Ballet will open their 1954 U.S. tour at the **Metropolitan Opera House**, **New York**. This was the opening house for **Sadler's Wells** which drew such a fabulous gross sale.

● HECKLE BUCKLE

Richard Buckle, **A. H. Franks**, **Caryl Brahms** and **Annabel Farjeon** will be discussing the audience's questions at the December 20 meeting of **London Ballet Circle**.

Non-members are again welcome, the address is **Salle Erard**, 18 Great Marlborough Street, W.1.

● CHERRY TRIO

Apart from the news that **Florida**, to rival **Las Vegas**, is to stage



SOLOISTS FOR AUSTRALIA

gh in 1954 . . . Young Ballet . . . Festival in U.S.



● **DANILOVA and ROLAND VASQUEZ** in **COPPELIA** during their appearance in Tokyo.

a passion play . . . the intriguing novelty of the month is announced by Agnes de Mille.

The de Mille company is to stage a ballet on the Mary, Joseph and Jesus legends, entitled **CHERRY TREE**, and using Kentuckian folk music as its score!

● IN ADVANCE

As we go to press, a copy of Pigeon Crowle's **TALES FROM THE BALLET** (Faber & Faber; 12/6) has just arrived. This will be fully noticed in the January issue but, meanwhile, I would like to say that—of all the dance books seen so far—this is by far the best one for Xmas 'giving' to a child.

Beautifully produced, a ballerina embossed on the cloth cover, eight of the most popular standard ballets, and several others, are described and illustrated expertly. I thoroughly recommend it.

● LANG IN LONDON

Harold Lang may well come to London for Jack Hylton to star in **PAL JOEY**. This is the show which made Gene Kelly's reputation and was a hit for Lang recently on Broadway. Evelyn Laye is mooted as costar.

● IN ANTONY

Pauline Grant arranged the bacchanalian dance for Antony, Octavius Caesar and their "friends" in Byam Shaw's **Stratford ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA** at the Princes. Michael Redgrave brought an Antony to the London stage of physical and vocal

dimensions long unseen. If this was a triumph for the Cleopatra of Peggy Ashcroft, it was still more a pinnacle for Redgrave.

Perhaps the best compliment one can pay this Stratford ANTONY is that it makes sense—great, theatrical sense—of what can be so easily a fictional esotericism.

● LESLIE'S A PETIT

Leslie Caron is a Petit too—but no relation to Roland. Leslie is the daughter of Margaret Petit who danced on Broadway—where Leslie opens next month—in the '20s. The ballet being choreographed for Leslie Caron by Petit is rumoured—stress the word—to be about a modern sleeping beauty.

● THAT'S TASTE

BALLET TODAY'S New York critic Hope Sheridan pencils in a

note on her Sadler's Wells copy (in this issue) to explain the constant misspelling in her typescript of George Blanchine.

"It always comes out Ballantine," she writes, "because my secretary thinks of Ballantine—a popular brand of beer." Hope forgets to say that this is not so incongruous—Serge Denham's last Monte Carlo Ballet had a try at interesting Pabst Beers in sponsoring a ballet!

● IN OPERA

Balletgoers interested by Wakhevitch's decor for Petit, might well visit Covent Garden during the "off season" merely for Wakhevitch's magnificent **CARMEN** designs.

This is the Tony Asquith production and, certainly, in his designer he has chosen well.

SWAN LAKE IN 3 D

SWAN Lake is not a novelty in Barcelona, neither are 3-D films, so the audiences who first saw this film, being used to very good performances of this particular ballet, were mostly curious to see its production as a film.

A résumé of opinions from the audience showed that the average film public thought that it was a very pleasant film, whereas the more exclusively ballet public did not think much of it. The latter were critical of every technical detail or interpretation of the dancing and did not like the way the ballet was adapted to film technique.

DARK

The film is rather dark which makes the colours dull. This also affects the setting which is cleverly conceived but not so well carried out. Some sequences are out too sharply, which tends to break the spell, and the dramatic quality is not brought out enough. Perhaps the best shots are those of the corps de ballet. However, as has been said, the average public is not critical of these details, and thoroughly enjoyed the film as a whole.

3D opens a wide field of possibilities for ballet films which is only just beginning to be exploited, and this film can be considered as a good attempt. We are impatiently waiting for the day when we shall see perfect 3D film technique and Technicolor in collaboration with good dancing.



SPAIN

Pilar Llorens

EVEN though Spanish audiences feel more attraction for their own national dancing, they have also developed an interest and a taste for classical ballet.

Barcelona, nowadays, is the centre of ballet in Spain, and **Juan Magrina** is the main authority. Magrina is an accomplished dancer, choreographer, and since 1939 first dancer and maitre de ballet at the Opera House, being a pupil of Tchernicheva and Preobajenska. He also produces the ballets for the national and foreign opera companies which perform at the Opera House, is in charge of the only official ballet school which together with the acting and scenography sections, form the "Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático."

The Director of this Institution, **Sr. Diaz-Plaja**, is now engaged in organizing a school in Madrid to be run on similar lines.

The Opera House of Barcelona is mostly responsible for creating interest in the ballet; it has a great tradition, and its own corps de ballet is composed exclusively of Spanish trained dancers under the guidance of Señor Magrina. The principal dancers are **Rosita Segovia**, **Maruja Blanco**, **Aurora Pons**, **Antonio Monllor** and **Jesus Garin**.

Every Spring a foreign ballet company is invited to perform at the Opera.

After the four month Opera season is over, the dancers from the Opera join the private com-

pany "Ballets de Barcelona" under the direction of **Sr. Segura-Tarraga**, and tour the country; last year they appeared in Paris on an official visit.

In the company's repertoire there are both classic and Spanish ballets, among the former, **CARNIVAL**, **SWAN LAKE** (Act II), **LES SYLPHIDES**, **PAS DE DEUX**, etc., and in the latter a number of Spanish ballets created by Señor Magrina; these have a story and some have more than one act; they are based on Spanish dancing and music, the best of these being **LA REVOLTOSA**, **EL DIABLO COJUELO**, and **LA DOLORES**.

Apart from the above, there are also several private ballet schools in Barcelona, which generally organize a yearly performance of their students.

In Madrid the situation as regards private academies is much the same as in Barcelona, but owing to the reconstruction of the Madrid Royal Opera House there is still no official corps de ballet attached to the Opera as in Barcelona. Nevertheless, when the new "Real Instituto de Arte Dramático" is inaugurated it is hoped to form a corps de ballet with its own school.

Throughout the rest of Spain, ballet is now beginning to be known and appreciated through the performances which are given by touring companies, national or foreign.

PARIS

Ferdinand Reyna

AT the Palais de Chaillot on October 1st, the Yugoslavian Ballet gave a series of folk dances, with remarkable success. A varied programme of dances from Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia, Slovakia, Montenegro, and Dalmatia. The dances themselves did not differ so much from each other, but the technical virtuosity was excellent, and the precision, an enchantment. The outstanding brilliance of the costumes with their richness of colours, was a spectacle in itself.

Roland Petit. The much awaited Roland Petit and his Company arrived on October 2nd, at the Théâtre l'Empire, where they presented the **LADY IN THE ICE** which has already been shown in London.

There was a large audience, but unfortunately the public and the critics were disappointed.

The musical score by **J. M. Damase** was not very outstanding and the work itself was considered extremely "cold"—it lacked the

enthusiasm of former productions such as **DEUIL EN VINGT-QUATRE HEURES**, **LE LOUP**, of the tragic **JEUNE HOMME ET LA MORT**.

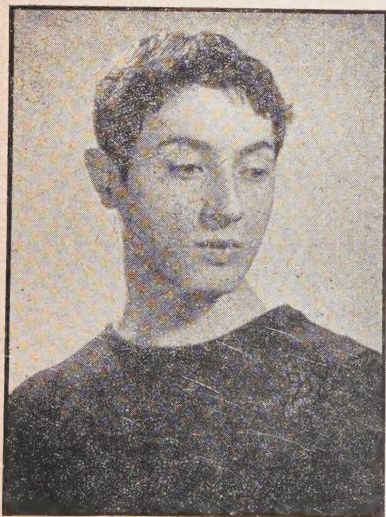
The audience were indifferent and **Roland Petit** was disappointing, however his style, is inimitable. **Colette Marchand** as "The Lady" looked wonderful, and **George Reich** had lost none of his efficiency.

In the ballet **LA CROQUEUSE DE DIAMANTS** **Liliane Montevicchi** most successfully danced the role that was so well suited to **Renée Jeanmaire**. Worthy of mention in the same ballet, was the promising young dancer, **Violette Verdy**.

Rosario and her Company. Since separating from her partner **Antonio**, Rosario appeared with her own Company, at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, on October 3rd. The performance lacked warmth and style. She was partnered by **Roberto Inglesias**, who danced well.

On November 13th, the Académie Chorégraphique de l'Opéra led by **Serge Lifar**, will commemorate the 25th anniversary of **Enrico Cecchetti's death**. His son, **Grazioso Cecchetti**, will be present. He lives in Turin, and has just finished an important work entitled "My Father's Teachings" which describes the greath methods used by Cecchetti.

At the age of nine, **Christine Pagava** has made her "début" at the Théâtre du Casino, at Vichy. She danced in **Gabriel Pierné's** ballet **CYDALISE ET LE CHEVRE PIED**. At the same performance, her sister **Ethery**, partnered by **Milhora Miskovich**, danced **LE LAC DES CYGNES** and **ROMEO ET JULIETTE**.



© ANTONIA MONLLOR, a young, promising dancer of the Barcelona Opera.



© MARUJA BLANCO, mentioned above by Pilar Llorens.



Milan

© Shabatevsky is seen here rehearsing SUSANA ECRI (second from left) in a ballet for Italian television in a Milan studio.

(Photo: Bertaszini)

sky. The story was so unclear and ballet, modern and pantomime made such a hopeless muddle.

The only "high spot" of the evening was in some moments of "Miss Lulie," a ballet by Birgit Culberg after Strindberg's drama. For instance the Swedish folk dance sequences in wonderful costumes! Elsa Marianne von Rosen danced Julie with powers of mime, but lacked in technique. Teddy Rhodin as the servant and lover could not quite convince. The music was by Ture Rangstrom and the sets and costumes by Sven Erixsons.

The really full success was the performance of the Städtische Opér with "Hamlet" by Boris Blacher and "Choreomusica" to a divertimento by Mozart. And the writer is a little proud to say this with good conscience!

The abstract "Choreomusica" was the beginning and the choreography consists of one imaginative enchantment after another. Especially the adagio with Suse Preisser and Rainer Kochermann in the principle parts suited ideally to their gifts. A young dancer, Tana Herzberg, chosen from the corps de ballet, danced at her best in the pas de deux and pas de trois.

HAMLET

The big event was "Hamlet," choreography and idea by Tatjana Gsovsky based on the famous tragedy of Shakespeare. Her work is suggestive and keeps the spirit of the story. She created this programme especially for the festival month and Berlin hopes to see it further in the repertoire.

Gert Reinholm is an ideal Hamlet. He danced this role two years ago at the Theatre Colon in Buenos Aires. Dramatic power, lyrical gift and natural elegance makes him an outstanding success.

Gisela Deege danced Ophelia, her expression of sweetness and frenzy made the evening memorable. Liselotte Koster and Jockel Stahl were the Queen and King and well cast for these roles. Both gave an interesting interpretation. Laertes was Rainer Kochermann, an excellent dancer of pleasant technique and appearance. Not to forget Erwin Bredow as actor and grave-digger, a dancer of great talent.

The corps de ballet prove themselves as a well trained group and the orchestra played under conductor Rudolf Albert. Decors and costumes were by Paul Seltenhammer, but the latter were not at all very happy.

BERLIN

— Eva Bulow

ROLF ARCO choreographed the musical numbers for Fritz Fischer's new production of the revue-operetta entitled "Alles für Sylvia" at the Titania Palace. Lilo Ninowka and Harald Siefloff headed the ballet cast.

The world premiere of the opera "Des Simplicius Simplissimus Jugend" by Karl Amadeus Hartmann was to be seen at the Hebbel Theatre. The choreographer, Gustav Blank arranged the dances for Lilo Herbeth and Erwin Bredow, both soloists of the Städtische Oper ballet ensemble, Berlin.

Two performances of Monteverdi's "Poppäa" were shown during the festival month and made a strong impression. The regisseur was Ludwig Berger and Jens Keith staged the dances, decors were by Ita Maximowna, Berlin.

Katchaturyan's wonderful ballet score "Gayaneh" with choreography by Tom Schilling was given at the National Theatre Weimer.

The State Theatre Wiesbaden presented a ballet performance, danced by a newly engaged ensemble under the direction of Hans Heinz Steinbach. With Rossini-Respighi's LA BOUTIQUE, FANTASQUE and Arthur Bliss' ADAM ZERO. LA BOUTIQUE gave the entrée and possibilities to all members. Ruodi Barth's decors and costumes were delicate in colour and amusingly stylised, but the choreography unremarkable. The only successful dancer was Marcel Luipart and appeared in the title role of Adam Zero.

Again Dore Hoyer appears in her own solo performances in various cities. The programme is the same as that in South America and includes the suite "Der grobe Gesang." The name of her pianist is Dr. Wiatowitsch.

CHARRAT

Janine Charratt and company will tour for two months in Germany. Her partner is Peter van

Dyk, formerly leading soloist and choreographer in Berlin and Wiesbaden.

The German Song and Folkdance Ensemble from the east zone of Germany is presenting a big show in the western districts. Soloists, choir, orchestra and dancers make together a membership of 180. Sets and costumes are by H. Kilger and H. Siloff and the artistic director is Hans Muller. The Swiss and German choreographer Anne Goldschmidt and Thea Maass were responsible for the dances.

Another folk dance group comes from Sweden in colourful costumes and delightful dances and represents the different provinces of their country. Most of the themes were taken from rustic life.

The American National Ballet during the festival in Berlin. To say something about the A.N. Ballet is useless, because this company gave a four week season at the Royal Opera House in London with the same repertoire. This was the second visit in Berlin and despite Alonso and Youskevitch the reception was not so enthusiastic. And it was a pity that they presented not more truly American ballets. The old classics Germany had seen in better quality. But it was, on the whole, a successful season.

The next visit was to the Royal Swedish Ballet, but what a disappointment! This company, new to Berlin audience, presented a programme in bad taste, with no sense of style and no understanding of ballet. The works were other than announced, but surely not the best. The "Classical Suite" was an attempt to interpret Lalo's music in terms of pure movement, only the choreographer and principle male dancer Bjorn Holmgren had no rich ideas and it was boring and badly rehearsed.

MISSED

The three ballerinas — Ellen Rasch, Marianne Orlando and Elsa Marianne von Rosen — let miss every sign of technique (and style too). Perhaps it is the best to keep silence about the ballet "Visionen" with choreography by Julian Algo to music by Moussorg-



The Cost of Ballet as a Career

By Nicholas Valentine

HAVE you £1500 to spend to enable your son or daughter to become a dancer?

For that is approximately what it would cost you; unless, of course, you were able to obtain a grant from the Local Education Authorities, or on the other hand your child was talented enough to be able to win a scholarship.

The £1500 includes the education and training of a dancer from the age of nine, until he or she is eighteen; after that there is no guarantee that she will be able to secure a job at the end of her training, and there are certainly no large financial rewards to be reaped; but a life of digs and practise, of hurriedly snatched meals, of hard work and often disappointments.

To give some idea of how the money is spent let us take for example a little girl, who lives on the outskirts of London with her parents, and has aspirations of one day becoming a ballet dancer.

She will have to travel to school every day, for three terms in each year, for nine years.

She will have to have all her text and exercise books to enable her eventually to take her General Certificate of Education; she will have to have her school uniforms, which include such articles as ballet skirts, practice tunics, shoes and tights; she will have to have her lunches at school every day unless she brings her own lunch with her.

Here is a table giving a brief account of what the money is

spent on over a nine years period.

£	s.	d.	
945	0	0	Fees
243	0	0	Lunches
150	0	0	Clothes
90	0	0	Fares
12	0	0	Books, etc.
£1440	0	0	

I have given you an example of a girl who lives near London, but there are many others whose homes are inaccessible to a ballet school, and these would have to attend a boarding school, in which case the cost of their training would be almost doubled.

Having given you some idea of the cost of the training, I would say that, unless you have ascertained on first-class authority that your daughter possesses the qualities that one day will create a dancer, I can only give you Noel Coward's very well-meaning advice: "Don't put your daughter on the stage, Mrs. Worthington!"

(I will gladly answer queries on training if a stamped and addressed envelope is enclosed).

VISITING SEVERAL MORE SCHOOLS

OUR first call this month was on Dance: Miss French, who holds the Ruth French School of her school in a large studio in Bayswater, has for many years examined for the Royal Academy of Dancing abroad, and has only within the last year opened her present school Bayswater, although for some years she used to have a school in Baker Street.

Character, National, Musical Comedy and Tap Classes are held each week besides special classes for children; pupils are entered for all the R.A.D. examinations, whilst students may also train to become teachers. Her students have danced with both the Sadler's Wells and the late Metropolitan ballet companies and there are now pupils of hers dancing in the various Musical Comedies in the West End.

From Bayswater to Hungary, or rather to the Dinely Studios in Marylebone, where Miss Klari Szechy holds her school of National Character Dance. Miss Szechy, who has lived, danced and taught in Budapest, has only recently

opened her school in London. She specializes naturally in Hungarian and other national dances. She was trained in Budapest with

—To page 22

★
JEAN
BABILEE
who
dances
this
month
with
Roland
Petit
at
the
Stoll

★



AFTER almost months of expectation, Sadler's Wells opened its gala four weeks season at the Metropolitan Opera House on Sunday evening September 13. The new production of LA LAC DES CYGNES was chosen as the first bill.

Two years ago the Sadler's Wells brought to the United States a LAC very different, choreographically, than the one which graced the stage of the Metropolitan on this festive occasion. It is true, however, that there is a large difference in Swan Lake this year and that lies not in the choreography, but in the way the Wells company dance it. Tchiakovsky's magical masterpiece has lost a great deal of its brilliance and feeling. Perhaps, it can be blamed on the fact that there are many new faces in the Wells' corps de ballet and these new people have not yet become an integral part of the Petipa Ivanov-Sergueev ballet. As far as the Wells' production of Lac in concerned, we shall have to take the deed for the will.

The opening night performance which saw Margot Fonteyn in the role of enchanted Princess and Michael Somes as Prince Siegfried was at best, a shaky Lac. Odette-Odile has never been Fonteyn's forte and it is to be assumed that a long trip over plus a case of first-night nerves combined to make this performance even less brilliant than it has been in the past.

VIOLETTA ELVIN: Although Americans had seen Elvin with the Wells in their previous tours, this audience had never had an opportunity to see her in ballerina roles before.

Many of us had anticipated the pleasure of her LAC and the

Hopie Sheridan

GIVES HER IMPRESSIONS OF SADLER'S WELLS IN NEW YORK

curiosity of an authentic Russian interpretation of this taxing role. Unfortunately, that pleasure was greatly reduced by the fact that this talented performer appeared far off her usual fine form.

Fonteyn's SLEEPING BEAUTY: This is Fonteyn's metier. Hers is the real fairy tale Aurora—a gay, lilting, and enchanted 16-year-old princess. The joie de vivre that this dancer has managed to project into her characterization makes her Sleeping Beauty a thing of wonder. Michael Somes provides fine support as Prince Florimund, while Svetlana Beriosova is a regal, yet warm Lilac Fairy. Even in a ballet that is without question all Fonteyn's, Beriosova is capable of holding the stage.

VIOLETTA ELVIN in the role of the Princess presents a far different conception. It is a young and charming Aurora, not quite so naive and a little more imperial but every bit as charming. Here conception of the role follows the Russian tradition, which considering Elvin's background and training, is valid. The difficult Act I dancing is accomplished with assurance and style. In physical appearance Elvin presents a stunning Aurora.

DAPHNIS AND CHLOE succeeds in establishing basic tensions and plotline in the first scene (before the cave of the nymphs). The dances for the young shepherds and shepherdesses before the cave of Pan are happily inventive. The *pas de deux* of Daphnis and Chloe follows classic lines, in so much as it appears to be the first half of a classic pas de deux; the other two variations and coda taking the form of a dance contest between Daphnis and Dorkon for the affections of Chloe.

Fonteyn's solo before the pirate chief, her hands tied, is lyrically beautiful, perhaps, the finest solo work she has been given in the ballet.

The matinee of LAC presented Rowena Jackson in the duel role of Odette-Odile with Michael Somes as her partner. Miss Jackson is crisp, neat and authoritative, but as yet she has not reached the dramatic core of her character.

The evening performance presented Nadia Nerina as Odette-Odile and Alexis Rassin as Siegfried and is perhaps a more rewarding presentation. Miss Nerina is a softer, more pliant Odette, younger and more lyrical. She is a strong dancer. Artistically, hers is, as yet, a tentative performance, the fulfillment of which will depend largely upon how quickly and how well this fine dancer matures.

September 22nd saw Nadia Nerina in her first American performance of Sleeping Beauty. Hers is, indeed, a very young princess. She is charming—with a wonderful light quality about her which appears to fit the role of a sixteen-year-old. Musically she has not yet learned phrase, this is a little disturbing in spots, however, the almost child-like warmth she displays in the first act is quite winning (although it is hard to believe that such a young Aurora can be ready for marriage to anyone).

SYLVIA: Ashton's production follows the late 19th century style. Ashton is in complete command of this style as well as several others. SYLVIA is pure, unadulterated 'corn'; the second and third acts are weak, nevertheless the ballet contains some charming, as well as, exciting dances for both Sylvia and Aminta. The spontaneity of Ashton's invention (especially for Sylvia) is striking—her waltz in the first act and the pizzicato polka, again the clever oriental divertissement for the two servants in the second act, the little dance for Eros in the first act and the brilliant male variations and classic pas de deux for the two principal dancers in the last act. In the role of Sylvia, Fonteyn is charmingly in period, Somes is a stalwart partner and John Hart makes a fine villain.

September 30th brought Violetta Elvin to the role of SYLVIA. El-

To page 19, please

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**To: BALLET TODAY,
15, Penrhyn Road,
Kingston, Surrey.**

Name

Address

The Sensational Teaching of FERENC NADASSY

TWO brilliant dancers from behind the 'Iron Curtain' appeared recently in London and there is no doubt that such dancing had not been seen here by our generation.

I do not wish to enter into polemics—a great deal has already been said about their style. But one thing is certain: their superiority over the dancers in the West was proven beyond doubt.

Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky shook the entire ballet world, first here, then in Paris, and I am sure I will satisfy the curiosity of many BALLET TODAY readers who wonder how such dancers were trained to such high standards.

by
**KLARI
SZECHY**

★ Seven Years

I myself have spent seven years in training with Ferenc Nadassy, ballet master of the Budapest State Opera, who also trained Kovatch and Rabovsky prior to their going to Soviet Russia.

He brought them to such a standard as was noticed by Galina Ulanova who invited them to Leningrad and Moscow. Maestro Nadassy was a progressive. I find his method, which I follow in most ways, different in many respects from that taught over here. I consider this method better—as could be seen from the few glimpses we had of Rabovsky and Kovach.

The first and most important aim of Nadassy was to achieve technical purity and perfection. He did everything at the same time to develop feeling and expression but he used to say that you cannot really teach feeling. A dancer must be born with it and, if it is there, it is bound to come out sooner or later.

On the other hand feeling and expression are lost if the dancer has to struggle with technical difficulties. Such worries should not exist when it comes to performing. This method achieved a surprisingly high standard in the corps de ballet as well. Any corps girl can execute thirty-two fougues with ease! In technique there is not the enormous difference as here between the corps and the principals.

The musicality of a dancer is

developed by all possible means. I find here in England that, generally speaking, the corps does not seem to be sufficiently musical... they lack rhythm, harmony and—definitely—they fail to convey the music to the audience. I cannot help thinking that this must have something to do with their training.

★ Overcome Dryness

The musicality of a dancer has to be brought out right from the beginning. The most simple exercise should be executed in perfect harmony with the music.

When there is harmony, feeling comes more naturally and the dryness of technique is overcome. It is the duty of the teacher to set the rhythm of every exercise and to keep a constant ear on the pianist, too, so avoiding slapdash, disinterested accompaniment. You have to make the students feel the music, not only with their feet but with their whole body, arms, head... all should move in harmony. This will make them find the spirit of dancing even in the most difficult and tedious exercises. They will enjoy the "dancing" forget about hard work. Thus technique, through harmony, develops with ease.

We have to admit that the ballet score is sometimes difficult to tackle, even for the well-trained and musically talented dancer.

I mentioned that Maestro Nadassy was very progressively minded. In his school he opened a course in tap dancing, which was taught by an expert. He advised everybody, including the principal dancers from the Opera Ballet, to attend a class once a week. He said that tap could assist in developing the sense for rhythm and would help the dancer to overcome difficult rhythmical changes in the music.

It proved to be very useful. Naturally, many frowned upon this at first, but soon it attracted enthusiasm.

To go even further he engaged a prominent teacher of acrobatics—for obvious reasons! If a dancer was becoming too stiff this was easily checked before it could go too far. But, unless it was abso-



lutely necessary, he never compelled anyone to attend these extra classes.

His students were merely advised of the advantages such classes offered.

★ Pointe Work

Perhaps it will sound surprising that we only had one pointe class a week. But this from start to finish demanded everything on pointe.

I would like to mention that no beginner was allowed to put on pointe shoes except after a full year of solid training through the basic steps in soft shoes.

I was shocked, here in England, to see in several schools that, after a few weeks, beginners are advised to start pointe work. This, of course, is criminal, because the muscles are not yet ready to take the strain. I am sorry for the student who, of course, is shrilled by the mere thought of her first pair of pointe shoes. She cannot realise the harm she may do her own career.

Character classes were regular features of every week. Starting with special character barre work—this has its own technique.

These classes were the most exciting of all and we looked forward to them in spite of the fact

Ferenc Nadassy with his wife in Hungarian costume. Now 56, Nadassy is still teaching. On the right: an informal dinner shot, taken at London's Pigalle, of Istvan and Nora (on left) and — fourth from left — Klari Szechy who wrote this article on Nadassy's teaching which she follows to a large extent.



Below: Istvan Rabovsky excites an audience of technical workers and extras while shooting **DANCING TO FREEDOM** in Berlin immediately after his escape with Nora.

that they were also the hardest. Most English dancers avoid character classes, which they definitely dislike. I wonder why? Character work is an organic part of a good ballet training. It builds up endurance, strengthens the muscles.

Taught the right way it brings out the expressive power of the entire body and gives the dancer the "attack" which makes her ready to convey with ease the most dynamic parts of any choreography. Character work is of high importance.

Girl dancers were also trained for wide and big leaps, not only for small jumps and beats as they are here. Boys, of course, developed this even more—I should say to the highest possible standard.

The dancer here is trained more for the static beauty of line than for the dynamic expression of movement.

Here, the dancer excels in balancing a position to such a length of time that it often is really overdone. One has the feeling of looking at a lifeless statue. Through this dancing becomes cold, frozen and loses its elan. Balancing for its own sake becomes meaningless, and the sensation of a live performance suffers.

To page 15



IN the reign of the first Elizabeth, foreigners very often referred to her subjects as the 'Dancing English.' Visitors who came to this country were also very generous in their praise of the many excellent dancing academies in the capital which is evidenced by the Duke of Bourbon's speech in Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth:—

*'They bid to us their English
Dancing Schools
And teach La Voltas high and
swift Corantos.'*

The accession of the Tudor dynasty to the English throne resulted in this country becoming more receptive of foreign influences which had a great effect on the development of dancing in England.

In 1501 Katherine of Aragon arrived to become the bride of Prince Arthur and it was she who introduced the Pavane, a very popular Spanish dance into England. When Henry the Eighth's sister returned from France after the death of her husband, King Louis the Twelfth, she brought back with her, her English waiting woman Mistress Anne Boleyn who on her subsequent marriage to Henry became Queen.

In consequence French influence was paramount in English dancing for several years. Henry himself was a very talented musician and until he became a veritable mountain of flesh, was a very graceful dancer.

It will be remembered that in Shakespeare's play of Henry the Eighth there is a scene in which the King with a band of courtiers, all masked and disguised as shepherds, came at night to the palace of Cardinal Wolesey. Subsequently the King danced with Anne Bullen. This was a Masque or masquerade in its most simple form which had been introduced by the King from Italy recently.

ORNATE

From this simple beginning the Masque was developed into the greatest and most ornate of court spectacles. From the masque, the ballet as it is known today in this country has been evolved. The original setting for a formal court masque was a stage which was ornamented with a representation of some physical features like a hill or a valley or a river.

Around this were grouped the performers. The stage was wheeled into the hall where the performance was to be given. At a suitable moment the performers alighted from the stage and carried out a prepared dance. The participants were ladies and gentlemen of the court who sang as they danced.

The idea in the minds of the de-

TUDOR MASQUE — and Current Ballet



© Beaujoyeux's Ballet Comique de la Reine

visers of these entertainments was to create a colourful spectacle which would be a delight both to the eye and the ear. Luckily several paintings have survived from the 15th century, some of which show royal dancers in action and others which give an authentic picture of the masque of the period.

There is one picture which shows Queen Elizabeth executing a La Volta with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

This dance was so called from the fact that in it the performers have to execute a high spring.

**BY
REGINALD
P.
MANDER**

GALLIARD

Being a graceful and accomplished dancer was the royal road to preferment at the Court of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Christopher Hatton, later Lord Chancellor, is said to have first come to the notice of his queen by reason of his graceful dancing of the Galliard, a dance mentioned by Sir Toby Belch in Twelfth Night.

A very good idea of a court masque at the period can be obtained from a painting depicting the celebrations attending on the marriage of Sir Henry Unton in 1580. In the picture the dancers are shown walking side by side in pairs, separated by five white, and five black cupids, who are acting as torch bearers preceded by Mercury, Diana and a Drummer.

Twenty years later it is known that there was another wedding Masque at which Queen Elizabeth herself was present as the bride was one of her maids of honour. The entertainment took place after supper at Lord Cobham's house after Anne, daughter of Elizabeth, Lady Russell had been married to Henry, Lord Herbert. The Masque introduced eight Muses who danced in search of their ninth sister, to the music of the Apollo.

Mrs. Fenton was the leader of the dancers, who after the introduction of the masque chose eight other ladies to dance a measure and they all came together to the Queen and wooed her to take a place in the masque.

This Mrs. Fenton was probably the Mary Fitton, who, by many is considered to be the Dark Lady of the Shakespeare Sonnets.

IN PLAYS

The Dramatists of the Elizabethan era were not slow to realise the latent potential dramatic possibilities of the masque and many of them, including Shakespeare, introduced them into their plays. In 1581 Balthasar de Beaujoyeux produced his celebrated 'Ballet Comique de la Reine' at the Palais Bourbon in Paris in honour of the betrothal of the Duc de Joyeuse and Marguerite de Lorraine, sister of the Queen of France.

This was so superior artistically to anything which had been seen previously that it is considered justly as a landmark in the evolution of the art of the ballet.

Not only did Beaujoyeux' ballet surpass all previous works of a similar nature but it indicated clearly the possibilities and the future line of development of the new art form. The deviser said that the idea in his mind had been to create something which blended music, drama and dancing and which would be appreciated by the sight, the hearing and the intellect.

So great was the interest aroused abroad by the new work that full details and a series of beautiful engravings was sent to most European capitals and it had considerable influence on the line of development followed by English ballet for in point of fact the more elaborate court masques of the period can be considered as embryo ballets.

"CAN BE"!

In 1596 a book on musical instruction was published in this country which gave a definition of
(to page 16)

NADASSY'S

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Pirouettes and tours were taught by Nadassy in a superb way. It was one of his specialities.

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As you see, we had special classes for everything. We were given sufficient time to concentrate on one subject at a time and the opportunity was given to really go into it fully. Nadassy's

schedule gave us a different task every day, our interest thus being kept fresh all the time. We were never bored by the repetition of exercises day after day. Once a week we had ports de bras and variations. So there was no monotony, every classe had its own excitements. It was more like a performance each time rather than just another class struggling for perfection.

Nadassy had his own way of making the most of everyone's talent — with shouting, without praising. He never praised anybody. The most remarkable results were taken for granted by him.

I believe Ferenc Nadassy to be one of the greatest ballet teachers of today.

Ballet in Thread by A. JUDAH



Pigeon Crowle

on

VIOLETTA

ELVIN

in the

JANUARY

BALLET TODAY

● Classified Advertisements

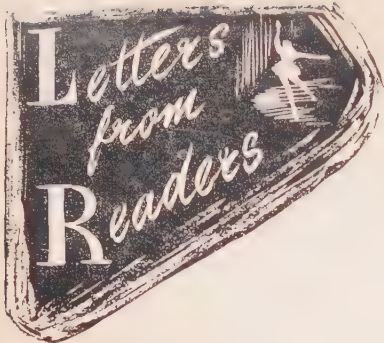
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BACK issues of Ballet Today are available at a cost of 1/3, including postage. A few recent issues are **Fonteyn in Spain**, **Anton Dolin profile**, **Concedance**—a tape-recorded argument (October). **Alicia Alonso, Ballerina Lost**—**Leslie Caron, A Daughter in Ballet** (July). The twelve 1953 issues, January to December, may be ordered at a cost of 12/6. Address orders, with cheque or postal order, to **Ballet Today**, 15 Penrhyn Road, Kingston, Surrey.

ONE classified advertisement in the October **Ballet Today** produced over 70 replies; and the cost is merely sixpence a word, a box number counting as two words. Cash with order please to: J. Stonebanks, 33 Crawford Place, W.1.



PROVINCIAL TRADITION

Dear Sir,

I SHOULD like to say how very stimulating I find "Ballet Today."

I was particularly interested in the article on a "Provincial Tradition"—could it be that some of the provincial Ballet Clubs who are prepared to discard the "cups of tea and social gossip" mental-

ity and get down to serious work might provide the nucleus of such a tradition?

I feel that the establishment of provincial repertory companies for ballet is long overdue and should be interested to get in touch with anyone else thinking along the same lines.

James R. Cooper,
Tyneside Ballet Workshop.

The Editor,
"Ballet Today,"
15, Penrhyn Road,
Kingston, Surrey.

: : May we have other ballet groups' thoughts on this theme?

FUTURES AGAIN?

I WAS disappointed not to see FUTURES in the November issue. This, I think, was the most readable feature I have ever read in a ballet magazine.

Jean Wilson,
Maryhill, Glasgow.

: : FUTURES is an irregular argument feature which BALLET TODAY records from the spontaneous discussion of several critics. The next one will be published early next year.

PRAISE

I IGNORE the fuddy-duddies who don't like anything more good-looking than a 19th-century TIMES. Yours is the best value on the market.

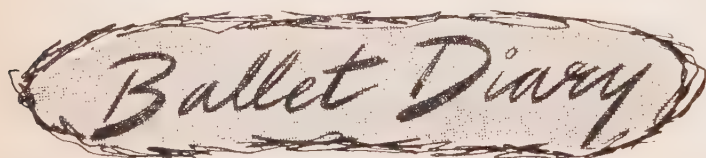
Frank Runsall,
Orpington, Kent.

. . . . AND PITY

I'M sorry that you seem unable to think above brightness. But I think BALLET TODAY far more healthy, alive and virile than before.

Mary-Janet Keith, S.W.7.

: : Thank you. One other reader in Sutherland, wrote three full pages of attack and finished up "but I do think BALLET TODAY the healthiest sign in ballet for a decade." Is this an attack? If so—we love it.



FESTIVAL BALLET

at Festival Hall, w/e

Dec. 23: LES SYLPHIDES, LE
BEAU DANUBE, ALICE
IN WONDERLAND.

Jan. 4: SWAN LAKE (Act I),
PRINCE IGOR, ALICE
IN WONDERLAND.

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

at Sadler's Wells Theatre

Dec. 9: PINEAPPLE POLL.

11: LES SYLPHIDES,
REFLECTION,
CARTE BLANCHE.

12 (mat.): COPPELIA.

16: LE LAC DES CYGNES
(Act II), REFLECTION,
PINEAPPLE POLL.

19 (mat.): LES DENDEZ-
VOUS, HAUNTED BALL-
ROOM, CARTE
BLANCHE.

22: COPPELIA.

26: SYLPHIDES, CARTE
BLANCHE, PINEAPPLE
POLL.

30: LES SYLPHIDES,
BLOOD WEDDING,
ILE DE SIRENES,
FACADE.

BALLET RAMBERT

Nov. 23-28: Norwich New Theatre
Royal.

Nov. 30-Dec. 5: Stratford-upon-
Avon Memorial Theatre.

TUDOR MASQUE

—from page fourteen

the ballet as 'Songs which being sung to music can likewise be danced.' Thus in the early days the stress in ballet was on the singing rather than on the dancing.

The full glory of the stately English Masque was not to come until a few years after the death of Queen Elizabeth, when Ben Jonson gave the masque a literary form which it had never had previously.

He was assisted by Inigo Jones who was the deviser of the scenery, costumes and mechanical effects. Alfonso Ferrabosco, Master of Music to James the First was responsible for the music and the choreographers were Thomas Giles and Hieronimo Herne.

It took three hundred and fifty years to bring the English ballet to its present high standards of artistry but it must be realised that, as with the drama, the chain of continuity was broken by the interregnum of the Commonwealth.

Despite this, however, the germ of the English ballet today can be traced to the stately court masques of the first Elizabeth.

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IN EVERY ISSUE

Gordon Keith

David Raher

Barbara Henson

AND

Peter Craig-Raymond

VIOLIN CONCERTO IN E MINOR (Mendelssohn). Isaac Stern (violin), Philadelphia Orchestra (Ormandy). **VIOLIN CONCERTO K216** (Mozart). I. Stern (violin), Chamber Orchestra (Stern). Columbia 33CX1071.

Stern plays both concertos without much feeling though he is slightly better in the Mendelssohn. This, together with A Midsummer Night's Dream Overture, was selected by Fokine for LES ELFES but the ballet has not been performed for some years. The Mozart is interesting as GRAZIANA, John Taras' first choreographic work, was set to this music. An abstract ballet, much influenced by Balanchine, it is memorable for the splendid dancing of the Ballet Theatre Company. The recording is very clear but the surface is a little noisy at times.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF PAGANINI (Brahms). **ETUDES SYMPHONIQUES** (Schumann). Geza Ando (piano). Columbia 33CX1072.

The score of Nijinska's ballet BRAHMS VARIATIONS, included those on Handel's theme, making it too long for the choreographic interest. Gore's KALEIDOSCOPE did not fall into this trap, and it was greeted with enthusiasm at the Mercury in 1949. The brilliant technical performance, as well as Ando's approach to this very difficult work, make it outstandingly the best LP version up to the time of writing. The same applies to the Schumann Etudes—Boris Kni-

Ballet for Home —on Record

aseff's ballet for the Roland Petit company—so that with the good recording and surface, all are to be congratulated.

SYMPHONY No. 1 (Prokofiev). **NIGHT ON THE BARE MOUNTAIN** (Mussorgsky). **ON THE STEPPES OF CENTRAL ASIA** (Borodin). **RUSSIAN & LUDMILLA OVERTURE** (Glinka). L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris (Ansermet). Decca LXT 2833.

The Classical Symphony was a perfect setting for the second scene of Tudor's deservedly popular ballet, GALA PERFORMANCE. The subtle wit and sparkle of Sally Gilmour, Elizabeth Schooling and Sara Luzita as the ballerinas, set a standard which visiting

companies have allowed to fall to the level of cheap slapstick comedy. The music is full of life and humour but Ansermet does not bring this out. His tempi are slow and drab, whereas in the Columbia recording 33CX1049 — regrettably not mentioned in our August issue — the Philharmonia under Markevitch's baton shows a far greater understanding of this Russian composer, and the gay and graceful score. Also the surface is better.

POEME (Chausson). **TZIGANE** (Ravel). Christian Ferras (violin) L'Orchestre National de Belgique (Sebastian) **SONATA FOR UNACCOMPANIED VIOLIN** (Honnegger). C. Ferras (violin). Decca LXT 2827.

Tudor's JARDIN AUX LILACS, exquisitely set to Chausson's Poème, has never been so poignantly danced as by Sally Gilmour with the Ballet Rambert. A masterpiece in their hands, the atmosphere of which has been completely captured by this beautifully played record. On the reverse side, both works are intensely interesting under Ferras' sensitive bow and there is much enjoyment to be gathered by attentive listening. This disc is certainly a must. Recording surface excellent.

SUITE IN F SHARP MINOR, Op. 19. (Dohnányi). Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles (Wallenstein). Brunswick AXL 2008.

Moir Shearer once said if she made a ballet, it would be to this suite, so it was with added interest that I awaited Cranko's THE SHADOW. It has proved popular though he failed to take advantage of Svetlana Beriosova's rare and beautiful qualities. The orchestra gives a competent performance but there is much more to be got out of this attractive, melodious work which is an asset to any collection. Surface excellent, recording satisfactory.

A MID-SUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM OVERTURE (Mendelssohn). **ROSAMUNDE OVERTURE** (Schubert). Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam (van Beinum). Decca LW 5046.

This is another excellent Medium Play record and I can recommend both of these delightful overtures. The Mendelssohn overture, together with his violin concerto already reviewed, completes the score for Fokine's ballet, LES ELFES. Recording good.

... briefly

... Petit's corps discovery, 20-year-old Liliane Montevecchio—a lovely girl, excellent dancer—was vetted by VARIETY and their Paris columnist told Hollywood to “look at her carefully” August 19th, 1952, was the date on which Gene Kelly's no-talking INVITATION TO THE DANCE film rolled here. On February this year a final three weeks shooting for the climax SINBAD sequence took place in Hollywood still no announcement of release date—why? . . . Carl Laemmle of Universal-International films paid £4,000 for a rug in the Paris Opera House thirty years ago; he used it in PHANTOM OF THE OPERA . . . a few weeks ago prop men needed carpet-bags for an Alaskan film—that is where the Opera rug ended its career

Alicia Markova appeared with the de Cuevas Ballet in Paris during November Sergei Denham's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo is reforming Zachary Solov is to stage a ballet for Anton Dolin's Festival company in 1954 Leslie Caron has been invited to star during Roland Petit's U.S. tour next year SLEEPING BEAUTY, in full, is to be produced in Rome Sonia Arova is to head Borovansky's Ballet in Australia—our rumour was right! David Lichin and Tatiana Riabouchinska are said to be forming a company in California to tour Europe doubtful if this will materialize

PIGEON CROWLE

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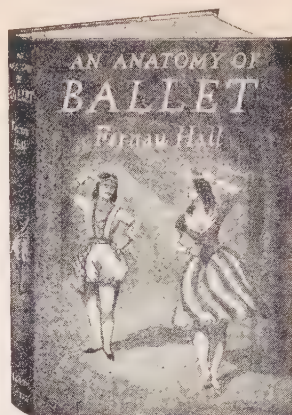


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Sheridan in New York

from page eleven

vin's Sylvia is a much more feminine, mischievous and voluptuous figure. Her imperial quality fits perfectly into the first set and her second act is dramatically quite convincing.

Fonteyn's GISELLE of the season was given on October 2nd. The Sadler's Wells has made many changes, restudied and remounted this production of Giselle. The outstanding improvements have taken place in the first act. The Wells production has suddenly become alive. The aliveness is primarily in the miming and group movements of the supporting characters and corps de ballet.

The second and last GISELLE of the season was danced on October 3rd and brought Violetta Elvin to the title role with Alexis Rassine as Albrecht.

Elvin's interpretation is more closely aligned to the 19th century romantic conception.

Her act one Giselle is more of an earthy peasant maiden indeed capable of an emotional and physical involvement of very sweeping consequences. Madness (of such madness as we are wont to see in 19th century romanticism) is most often a product of violent passion; it is simply the opposite swing of the emotional pendulum, therefore, the mad scene with its concomitant suicide is most acceptable in the characterization of a person we can believe capable of emotional range.

Giselle's capacities to love must be as obvious as her madness, else one cannot logically follow the other. The humanness and warmth of Elvin's peasant girl makes credible such a tragic liaison.

October 8th saw Svetlana Beriosova's first performance in the role of SYLVIA with Philip Chatfield as Aminta and John Field in the character role of Orion. Beriosova's Sylvia is young, imperiously bred and charming. The artistic awakening of this youngster has not yet occurred; she appears still to be dancing behind a veil.

We fervently await its lifting.

HOPE SHERIDAN

June Ryan

AT
CLAUDE MARCHANT'S
"TROPICAL RHYTHMS"
PROGRAMME



© Kathleen Stanford in BOND STREET BLUES. Below: WASH DAY RUMBA. Reviews of the programme are on page four.



© Claude Marchant whose company of American Negro and other dancers appeared at the Embassy Theatre last month. Below: June Ryan profiles Kathleen Stanford whose sheer verve made the evening's highlights.





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The Ballet Year

A SUPPLEMENT, reviewing in brief the year's ballet in London, by

PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

SADLER'S Wells Ballet at Covent Garden had a year of good performances and two rather facile creations — **VENEZIANA** and **HOMAGE TO THE QUEEN**. The latter, perhaps, is best excused as institutional advertising in the wrong media and left at that.

VENEZIANA, however, was a sadder failure. **Donizetti's** music was used—I phrase this all-embracingly — by **Denis ApIvor**, choreography was by **Andree Howard**, decor and costuming was by **Sophie Fedorovitch**.

This was **Sophie's** last work before her death and a most unfitting memorial to her talented lifespan. **Andree Howard** puzzled me by achieving so little but was to puzzle me even more with her nondescript piece for **Walter Gore** later in the year. **VENEZIANA** was a facile work of surface glimmer. Like a swizzled head on champagne it was outdated and hardly worth the trouble.

One of the very few critics to applaud **VENEZIANA**, **Richard**

This very short survey covers the ten months January to October, 1953. The 1954 version will cover November 1953 to October 1954. This year I have travelled less, seen more, lamented mightily. Yet, in retrospect, I can pass 1953 without saying, "This, then, was the year in which I, too, became a careerist pessimist."

The year has furthered London's newfound claim to be the world ballet centre and, certainly, more ballet has been seen here than is readily digestible by constant balletgoers. For the general public, however, the choice has been wide. This had led to slightly more discretion at the box office and, subsequently, to poor houses more often than several impressarios had believed possible of their naive audience.

One impressario should be given an accolade here: **Peter Daubeny**. In 1952 I called him ballet's man of the year for having so regularly brought dance to London. He deserves the title again.

On the credit side of the year I would place the American National Ballet Theatre, Royal Danish Ballet, **Pilar Lopez' Ballet Espanol**, **Roland Petit Ballets de Paris**, **Ballet Rambert**, and both the Wells companies. Sadly on the other side: **Walter Gore Ballet**, **Ballets Jooss**, **Bulbul Chowdhuri** and the Vienna State Opera contingent. The between-the-stools entry: **Festival Ballet**. A good company with an unremarkable year.

Buckle found it "delicate . . . pretty." But from **VENEZIANA** I wanted—apart from a theatrical ballet with rich trimmings and atmosphere—a showcase for **Violetta Elvin**. **La Favorita** failed her miserably.

Elvin was better served by that hotchpotch classic, **SLEEPING BEAUTY**. Simple and singular—**Elvin** found her new, mature quality leaping into this role. Confident, effective . . . a challenge to the impeccable, beautiful portrayal by **Margot Fontein**. Perhaps **SLEEPING BEAUTY** is a lost cause but its ballerinas can still attain their best in its clasp.

Rosemary Lindsay, **Michael Somes** and **Philip Chatfield** also impressed me during the season. **Beryl Grey** stayed excellently on top and **Svetlana Beriosova** took

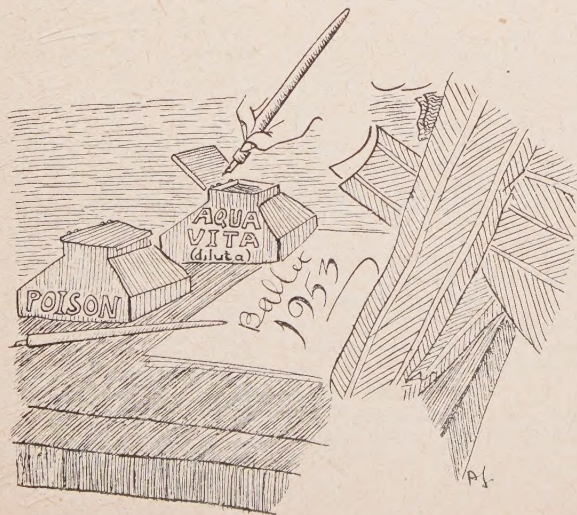
the worthwhile opportunity of **THE SHADOW** to win acclaim.

Ballets Jooss at Sadler's Wells Theatre disappointed me. In ballet's dry desert of the thirties **Jooss** was like a sudden spring . . . by 1933 the spring was dry—a landmark to note, a memory for nostalgic balletgoers of two decades ago. For the new viewers: nothing. Even **THE GREEN TABLE** was an indictment of war so slowpulsed as to be an historical exhibit. **Jooss** had not indicted the only real war—the latest one.

Festival Ballet at Royal Festival Hall had to be judged on two major works—**ALICE IN WONDERLAND** and **VILIA**. Whether the other two works of the season would have relieved my poor opinion of the 1953 output is doubtful. General press reaction was not enthusiastic. I could not judge myself: my reviews of **ALICE** were enough to withhold invitations to attend the other two!

Yet was my notice (in **BALLET TODAY**, anyway) so bad? I spoke of "several examples of fine dancing" . . . "Costumes were good, some extremely so" . . . "particularly melodic" . . . "perfectly dressed" . . . "well expressed". These few phrases may have been gentle compared to my overall impression of **ALICE** as a failure: but a malicious critic does not print quotable praise in his reviews.

VILIA, too, I praised in part and merely complimented **Ruth Page** by stressing that I expected more from her talents than the mere competence—good enough from most others—**VILIA** displayed.



"WITHOUT BECOMING A CAREERIST PESSIMIST"

To page 23

MILAN

—By Robert Paterson

A NEW Italian magazine entitled **IL CIGNO**, which announces a monthly review of Ballet, Dance, and Music in Italy, appeared for the first time at the end of September. How long this publication will last it is, of course, impossible to say; but the very fact that such a magazine, devoted principally to Ballet and not merely to Opera plus Ballet, has appeared, is a welcome sign of renewed interest in an art which has too long been neglected in Italy. Peter Craig-Raymond, **BALLET TODAY'S** Editor, is covering London for **IL CIGNO**.

It appears that two towns — Milan and Venice—are becoming, or are about to become, the focus of considerable balletic attention: Milan, because of an experiment at the Scala Opera House which, as will be seen, is now devoting more time and attention to ballet; and Venice, on account of the 25th anniversary of Diaghilev's death, which occurs next year.

IL CIGNO gives an interesting account of a new policy being tried out at the Scala, Milan. It amounts to this, that during last September the Scala put on ballet throughout the month—a most important innovation, and that, according to report, the season was successful.

Of the 21 performances given fourteen were by the New York City Ballet, and seven by the Scala soloists and corps de ballet. In the past, of course, no performances (other than concerts) were given in the Autumn at the Scala, the opera season opening usually just before or after Christmas.

Thus, by establishing a precedent in favour of ballet, the Scala has shown very considerable enterprise for such a conservative institution. It will be interesting to see if this new ballet season is continued next year.

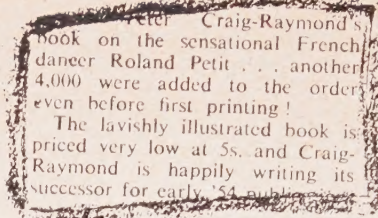
Visiting

Several More Schools

—from page ten

Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky. One of her beliefs is that she can be of great assistance to British dancers in ballets such as **COPPELIA**, **SWAN LAKE** or **PETROUCHKA**, where there are such dances as Mazurkas or Tarantellas.

Travelling westwards from Hungary, we eventually reach Spain, or rather the Elsa Brunelleschi Spanish Dancing Academy in the Westbourne Grove. The school is universally known, for dancers have even travelled from Spain to learn at her Academy. Madame



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BY PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

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Brunelleschi holds a very high opinion of South Africans, for only recently a young eighteen year old South African, Martell Carstens, was selected by Pilar Lopez to dance in her production of the **THREE CORNERED HAT** at the Stoll Theatre.

Back to Britain, and to West Hampstead, where Miss Laura Wilson, a Fellow of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dance holds her school of Dancing. Miss Wilson has herself studied under Maestro Enrico Cecchetti; appeared with Diaghilev, and as premiere danseuse at Covent Garden.

She opened her present school at the end of the war in a large house in Broadhurst Gardens, where she specializes in the classical technique of ballet and other forms of dancing.

South to Kensington, where Miss Felicity Deane and her sister hold their school of ballet. Miss Deane divides her week, by teaching the first half at her London Studio and the second down at Rottingdean in Sussex. They are very interested in the dramatic

aspect of Ballet, for recently they produced **GISELLE**, to which they had written a script. The production was entered in the All-Sussex Festival, and was awarded the Earl de la Warr Cup presented in conjunction with the British Drama League. Special children's classes are held, as well as a course which prospective teachers may undergo.

The last, and perhaps the best known school, which we are covering in this issue is the Aida Foster School in Golders Green. Here children are trained in all branches of the stage and dance; besides receiving a first class education up to the General School Certificate standard. Students also get special training in Musical Comedy and Tap dancing; every year Miss Foster's children appear in the principal London pantomimes, and in other theatrical productions. Many actors and actresses have been trained at her school, to name only one, Jean Simmons, at present under contract to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. They also have the advantage of a ballet and musical comedy training behind them.

ROLAND PETIT



from page 21

The American National Ballet Theatre at Covent Garden showed the company as understandably tired after their ill-starred tour. The season amazed me by having a Balanchin work, *THEME AND VARIATIONS*, that I found exciting. This startling revelation brought me three telegrams of congratulations "that you have seen the light". I went on to astound my well-wishers by devoting a 'Contemporary' article to Balanchin.

Why do magazine readers think a single damn synonymous with a peal-of-thunder judgment day? After praising Michael Somes for nine months of the year I had but to say his partnering was off form in one performance to receive thirty letters' decrying my blind ineptitude in not realising Somes's worth!

Of the Ballet Theatre season I thought *FALL RIVER LEGEND* remained a great contemporary work. *GISELLE* was shoddy but relieved, as was the season, by the wonderful work of Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch. Several thin jokes left me unsmiling—*GALA PERFORMANCE*, *THREE VIRGINS*, *LA FILLE MAL GARDEE*. This last work by Dauberval was shockingly staged. Eric Braun saved Babilée's *TILL EULENSPIEGEL*.

CAPRICHOS, taste-lacking admittedly, impressed me again with its sure theatrical effectiveness. Bartok may have swayed the issue!

Ballet Rambert at Sadler's Wells Theatre for two weeks cheered the London scene and gave limelight to Mary Munro and Beryl Goldwyn that neither will leave for some considerable time.

Apart from a rather lovely *SYLPHIDES* with Goldwyn, the

peak of the season was Rachmaninov's *WINTER NIGHT*. Mary Munro danced this modern classic exquisitely. The point of *WINTER NIGHT* was made later when the Gore season at the Princes posed the query: what happened to Gore?

Certainly *WINTER NIGHT* served to show the magnificence of Munro. But it also served as a recommendation for Gore that he, himself, waylaid.

Star of the season, however, was Rambert herself. Within the next month I was asked to write two special features on English ballet. I wrote, and sent off, two profiles of Rambert. Perhaps I could not have answered the requests any better.

During October a Spanish journalist interviewed me and halted my impressions of Rambert to ask "Yes, but is she with Sadler's Wells". Rather musingly I said "No—but what if she had been?"

The Royal Danish Ballet at Covent Garden surprised me by being as good as advance reports made out.

Margrethe Schanne was the season's revelation. A composed, sure, beautiful, gentle dancer she made criticism tawdry, unnecessary. In *SYLFIDEN* she was magnificent. Throughout the season, too, Gerda Karstens, Nora Vangsaa and Borge Ralov made positive their success. For English dancers the example supreme was in the corps work of these Danes. Backbone, heart and most live, integral limbs of the ballet.

Ballets de Paris de Roland Petit provided, of course, the most appetising meal of the year's menu. Perishable, but pleasing, Petit's work has none of the in-turned smallness of so much English ballet. Perhaps Petit had no suburban neighbours to inhibit his mind?

If *LE LOUP* was the finest ballet in the programme, the others—in their direction—were superlatively good. *CINE-BIJOU* was face-slapping in its eccentricities, *DEUIL EN 24 HEURES* made lavish the most merry of widows, *LADY IN THE ICE* was as much Orson Welles' "I can do it" work as fried ice cream is an experimental chef's!

Sold-out houses proved the public response to Petit. Without a doubt he is the most popular man in ballet for the general audience. And he is that rare phenomenon: a mass-appealing star and a dancer capable of most thoughtful work.

Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet at Sadler's Wells Theatre produced one fine and one poor work. *BLOOD WEDDING* by Alfred Rodrigues staged a promising trio

—Apívor's score, Lambert's dance decor, Rodrigues' not perfect but certainly worthwhile choreography.

For David Poole, Maryon Lane, Doreen Tempest (later seen as an interesting dancer in LAC) and Pirmin Trecu . . . sound roles.

CARTE BLANCHE by Walter Gore provided many parts, but nothing in the nature of 'sound roles'. A circus ballet it had its fun but little else.

Walter Gore Ballet at the Princes Theatre was rushed, under-rehearsed and a very sad first West-end Season for the company. Originally Gore was not coming into town until November and only the tight theatre situation must have forced him in against his inclination and resources.

Eleven ballets—ten by Gore himself—were announced. Ten were staged. Of these the least unhappy were MR. PUNCH, GENTLE POLTERGEIST and LIGHT FANTASTIC.

Grete Wiesenthal's Vienna Ballet at the Princes Theatre was billed as Austria's leading ballet. Using some of Europe's most attractive music this group of six young girls played havoc with the name 'ballet' and were deservedly booed on the first night. A most unfortunate excursion by the sponsors.

Pilar Lopez Ballet Espanol at the Stoll Theatre ends the year as far as this survey is concerned. If her Spanish TRICORNE was less satisfying than Massine's for Sadler's Wells this was in part due to bad decor and a lack of full-stage effect.

Apart from her own work which is, if anything, better than I had remembered it—the high carriage, roundly flexible . . . the glint of eyes and body as she swerves off stage—Lopez has the finest of Spanish companies grouped around her. Ximenez, Vargas, Lorca, De Donda are certainly impressive.

Lopez provides Spanish dancing in a theatrical, well-contrived guise. Authenticity might be more worthy, but I doubt if it would be more watchable.

Several small groups including and the Yugoslav Dancers, also ap-Bulbul Chowdhuri's Oriental Ballet peared in London during the year but were unremarkable.

Have the pleasures, then outweighed the peevess of the year? I remember J. C. Trewin asking himself this in the foreword to a volume on the year's theatre. He went on to detail the things he looked forward to in the following year! Perhaps the question was too ripe.

My answer: Yes. The salt has not yet landed on my tail as a balletgoer.

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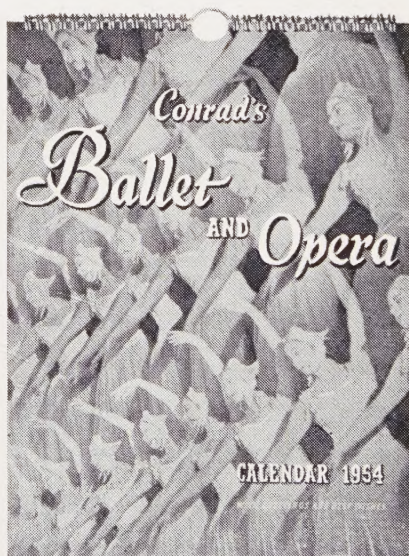
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